

STATEWIDE

PROPOSAL F2003-27

Existing regulation: Statewide - All Fish

No regulations exist specific to the harvest of fish for use in traditional religious ceremonies.

Proposed regulation: Statewide - All Fish

The taking of fish from Federal waters is authorized outside of published open seasons and harvest limits if the harvested fish will be used for food in traditional religious ceremonies, which are part of funerary or mortuary cycles, including memorial potlatches, provided that;

(A) The person (or designee) organizing the ceremony contacts the appropriate local Federal Fisheries Manager prior to attempting to take fish to provide the name of the decedent(s), the nature of the ceremony, the parties and / or clans involved, the species and the number of fish to be taken, and the Federal waters from which the harvest will occur; No more than 25 salmon or 5 steelhead may be taken;

(B) The taking does not violate recognized principles of fisheries conservation, and uses the methods and means allowable for the particular species published in the applicable Federal regulations. The local Federal Fisheries Manager may restrict the number, species, or place of taking if necessary for conservation purposes;

(C) Each person who takes fish under this section must, as soon as practicable, and not more than 15 days after the harvest, submit a written report to the appropriate local Federal Fisheries Manager, specifying the harvester's name and address, the number, and species of fish taken, the date and locations of the taking, and the name of the decedent for whom the ceremony was held;

(D) No permit is required for taking under this section; however, the harvester must be an Alaska rural resident with customary and traditional use in that area where the harvesting will occur.

Reason for changing the regulation: To allow for harvest of fish outside of published open seasons and harvest limits upon notice to the delegated local Federal Fisheries Manager if the harvested fish will be used for food in traditional religious ceremonies. Currently, no provisions exist for the subsistence taking of fish for ceremonial purposes. A similar provision is currently found only in subsistence wildlife regulations. This proposal would provide for ceremonial take of fish similar to provisions for ceremonial take of wildlife and cultural/educational take of fish.

Effect of change on fish or shellfish populations: There should be no long term impact to fish populations.

Effect of change on subsistence users: This proposal would allow for the subsistence take of fish for ceremonial purposes providing a benefit to communities as they have customary and traditional ceremonies. The proposed regulation is similar to existing regulations governing the take of wildlife for ceremonial purposes and fish for cultural / educational purposes.

Additional Information:

Proposed by: Office of Subsistence Management, Anchorage